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MEDIA RELEASE



### **Pharmac announcement life-changing for New Zealand's allergy community**

Allergy New Zealand is absolutely delighted with today's news that Pharmac has agreed to fund EpiPens® for people at risk of anaphylaxis.

"It is the best news for New Zealand's allergy sufferers in the more than 40 years that Allergy NZ has been representing them," Chief Executive Mark Dixon says.

The exciting announcement will make a huge difference to the lives of people living with serious allergies, who have had to pay between \$120 and \$350 for EpiPens®, which last only 12-18 months. "The cost has meant this lifesaving medication has been out of reach for many people with severe allergies," Dixon said.

"Today's announcement has been a long time coming and we are thrilled that our collective voice has been heard, and action has been taken to support New Zealanders living with the risk of anaphylaxis."

In the last two years, Allergy New Zealand has run two campaigns, FundaPen and FundaPen2 to provide free EpiPens® to the allergy community and raise awareness of the need for them to be funded long term. These campaigns were supported by Pub Charity to the tune of \$650,000. The FundaPen campaigns followed eight submissions for Pharmac funding of adrenaline auto-injectors over the last 20 years.

During the recent Pharmac public consultation period, Allergy New Zealand heard first-hand from allergy sufferers and their whānau up and down the country, who were 100 per cent in support of the funding.

"Our supporters and members sharing this success include Pub Charity and the funding they provided for our FundaPen campaigns; primary care teams; our clinical networks; our professional partners; and our wonderful staff, volunteers, medical panel and Board," Dixon said.

*For more information, or to organise an interview with Allergy NZ CEO Mark Dixon, please contact Michele Hider on 0275513458 or [email Michele@prioritycomms.co.nz](mailto:Michele@prioritycomms.co.nz)*